1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

To cure terrific abdominal pains, or "twisting the navel":

The constant pains and vomiting are said to be due to the untwisting of the navel. If the patient is to recover, his navel must be retwisted. Only a few people know how to do this. The one effecting the cure presses the navel with the index finger of his right hand, holds it firmly and starts walking around the patient. As he turns around he halts — at the head, at the feet, and at each side. He goes around like this seven or eight times and the patient recovers. (Aetolia and Arcadia)

Only special women can do this. The one who helps puts a rag around her finger, twists the navel several times until she feels it catch. Then she withdraws her finger and puts a compress on the navel: This compress is composed of blue paper into which some incense melted in *mastica* has been placed. (Spetsai)

Even though some of these practices are restricted to particular regions of Greece, and are carried out by only a few people in a given village, they do constitute a folk approach to healing. But there is one important belief, general throughout Greece, which is associated with illness: the Evil Eye. In one family, in a village near the town of Thebes, some of the members wore amulets which the priest had blessed and into which communion bread had been sewed. Elsewhere in Greece I saw amulets containing splinters of holy wood or earth from Jerusalem, worn around the neck. The women in explaining the Evil Eye said that one cannot always tell who casts the Evil Eye, but that there are some people in the village suspected of doing this and that they are to be avoided or else watched carefully.

If a child is believed to be under the spell (that is, shivers and does not feel well), the person suspected can be brought before the child and asked to spit three times to get rid of the curse, or the child can be taken to the priest who reads a blessing. Perhaps the cure thought most efficacious is a secret formula which an older woman passes on to a younger one with the instructions that it is never to be improperly revealed. Not all village women know the formula but only those who have been particularly selected by the wise women, or an older relative, for this purpose. In this village home, the women after much whispered discussion, decided details of the formula would do no harm since we were outsiders and would be leaving soon. Here are the basic elements:

Christ and the Virgin Mary
Passed through a crossroad;
They spread their golden apron
And ate. Crumbs fell on the apron.
They took those crumbs
And tossed them into the sea.
The sea waters were stirred up
And man was cured.

1:Sanders Z-5,t (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

755 But again we asked, "How can you be sure that the Evil Eye is the cause of the trouble?" "One can be sure," we were told, "if you take a pan of cold water to a high place, break an egg into it, and notice whether the egg cakes or not. If it does, the child has the Evil Eye but will get well. Or one can drop the coals from the wood of a thorn tree into the pan and, if the coals turn over, one knows that the evil will turn over and the boy will get well. We then sprinkle the water from this pan onto the child." This is one time when the incantation is surely used.

Chrysoula, a wise woman of Spetsai, gave me further information about the Evil Eye that was similar in essentials but differed in details. She said [753] that when her young granddaughter comes back from a walk and is restless and nervous, it is clear that an Evil Eye has been cast, in which case one must test to be sure. To do this, Chrysoula takes the *kanteli* (little oil lamp) from the household shrine and gets a glass of water. She picks up the child, makes the sign of the cross over her three times and then crosses the water three times. After that she dips her fingers into the kanteli and lets one, two, or three drops of oil fall into the glass of water. If the oil spreads or mixes with the water, the child has the Evil Eye; if the drops remain as oil drops and do not mix, then the child is not suffering from the spell. Should it be the Evil Eye, one crosses the child with the water on the lips or forehead and whispers words from the gospel or gives special prayers. [124] But unlike our informants in the village near Thebes, Chrysoula refused to tell us the text of the special prayer because she said she would lose her power; she did say, however, that if she were away from her village she could repeat it. Yet she was ready to fill in many other details.

754 To find out who cast the Evil Eye in a particular case, according to 755 Chrysoula, one gives cloves to three suspected persons with the request that each in turn toss them into the fire. The one whose cloves pop is the one who cast the Evil Eye. There is another way: one can drop three pieces of charcoal into a glass of water, and if any piece floats then the person represented by that piece of charcoal, whether present or not, is said to have cast the Evil Eye. The same procedure was commonly used in Aetolia.

[826] There are also other ways of knowing. People whose eyebrows meet together or those with green eyes can cast an Evil Eye. Even a mother, if she does not take proper precautions, can cast the spell on her own child. Chry- [751] soula told about a relation of hers who looked at her sleeping baby and [827] said, "my, what a nice baby you are!" and failed to spit on it as a guard against the Evil Eye. Four hours later the child spit up some froth and died. A person who learns that he has cast the Evil Eye, and this is often done quite unintentionally, can undo the spell by spitting three times on the neck of the person suffering if he spits without the sick person's knowledge.

869 The children of the home, whether supposed victims or not, cannot help
751
152

10: Lee E,I-4,5 (no date) 1953
EH1 Greece EH1

IMAGERY OF SELF

The image of the self includes that of the body and of the personality: the person. Life is structured and experienced according to the rhythm and patternings of the body, and ethics are defined by personal relationships, loyalties and roles, just as society is structured according to the physiological relationships of the body. The imagery which a lover uses to describe the body of his beloved is that which is used to praise the personal qualities of an adored leader.

There is no reference to softness in any of the personal folk songs of the Greeks, the dystichs directed toward a loved one, the lullabies, the dirges composed for a relative. The beloved is commonly likened to a tree, sometimes to a fruit tree, but most commonly to a cypress—slim, straight, tall, hard, resistant—"I embrace a cypress tightly," sings a lover. The body is likened to hard, cold substances. The neck of the beloved is made of crystal; the breasts are of marble, in the rare references found in impersonal folk songs. A lover sings: "All night I lay embracing gold."

Firmness and straightness are extremely desirable personal qualities. Babies were swaddled to keep them from going crooked and to make their backs firm. The gesture of mother love is one of holding a firm, stiff, straight bundle against the breast, not the crooking of the arms to accommodate a cuddling body. Firm and straight also is the ideal personality. Parents are urged to be firm of will with their children from birth, and to see that the children develop steadfastness. When Eleutherios Venizelos died, the leading Athenian newspaper wrote: "The cypress is fallen."

Cold, also, is attractive as well as admirable. To call a girl "cold water" is to call her attractive and desirable. Coldness and flowers are on a par in the folk songs, and lovers walk together among the flowers, or on snowy slopes. Hotness means a lack of control, unthinking response. Grief is hot, and tears wither the grass and trees they water. Love as suffering also burns: a lover sighs and 3,000 trees burn up. It is common for a passing youth to say to a girl, "You burn my heart."

The body image is the image of the Greek character. Fortitude and hardihood, firm will, a love of simplicity in food, entertainment, furnishings, the standard of living in general, are common traits. Greeks will smoke only a few cigarettes a day, drink within measure and eat in moderation; excess is disliked. Fortitude is an ever-present quality; the *philotimo* brooks no calculation of danger or pending pain before a step is taken. If a thing is worth doing, the price to be paid for it is irrelevant; and you are able to do it because you are strong and firm. You do not even ask yourself ahead of time whether you have the necessary fortitude; a Greek takes no inventory of himself because from the time he was a baby, his parents saw to it that

he grew straight and hard, and because he knows himself to be a Greek. A current book on child care warns parents not to take many toys to a sick child, not to clown for his amusement, lest this spoil him. Going to bed also is a sign of weakness except for recognized disease. A man cannot seek solace in bed for fatigue or indisposition, lest he appear to be giving in to a desire for pampering. Even to fall asleep is to give in; the term is "sleep caught me".

It is difficult to give this picture attractively, to show how there is warmth within this firmness, exuberance within the austerity, and within the discipline. Yet discipline is a positive, liberating, guiding element in the Greek personality: the simple life is a joy and is also freeing, since it creates few demands, few dependencies on the external. Self-discipline and self-control are not prohibiting; they are incentive. They are not the application of discipline to the self, but rather a way of behaving. There is nothing inconsistent with these traits when, in voting on an important issue by roll call, a member of parliament answers, "Five thousand times, yes", or when white pigeons are released in the House by the victorious party. This is appropriate exuberance, just as the fiery reaction to a violation of the *philotimo* is appropriate and within the channel of discipline. There is joy and dignity in hard work, not compulsiveness; there is joy in walking an hour and a half to and from the field twice a day over difficult ground. American visitors are taken for a walk by a young Greek village girl or even a child, and return exhausted. There is a revelling in sheer exertion, in sheer fortitude. There is nothing grim about it, neither is there boasting. Greeks may boast about their achievements, but not of their character, which they take for granted as Greek.

The organs of highest significance are the eyes. They are the seat of the person. With them, lovers and friends communicate, and they are the pre-eminent medium of enjoyment. Love comes through the eyes, and the eyes are mentioned the most frequently in the personal poems. "We have not seen you" means "We missed you."

In the folk songs, a beloved's eyes shoot arrows, strike with a poisoned sword, catch a man in a net, they burn the heart or break it into pieces; they lead astray, they bewitch, they destroy. Glances are rarely sweet, and never soft or gentle, in the love dystichs. Here eyes are always black, perhaps because one is apprehensive if they are blue, the colour of the evil eye. It is difficult to overestimate the joy of sheer vision. The folk songs are full of the beauty of flowers and meadows and streams, of the sea with its fleet of sailboats, of the blue of the sky. In villages and towns, the people go strolling after work is done, calling this not a promenade, but *syryani*, "enjoyable viewing." When a long-absent loved one is returning, people congratulate, saying: "Light for your eyes."

Next to the eyes come the lips, but, red and sweet though they be, they are primarily important because of the words which come out

of them. Like the eyes, they lead astray not through making false promises, but by engendering love. Speech is of extreme importance to the Greeks, since it establishes and fosters the all-important personal relationships. Almost everyone creates songs; love songs at the village festival, dirges, lullabies, songs of the way of life, songs of work, songs of one's village and of nature. It is important to find the graphic word in the most ordinary speech, and to turn a spicy phrase. Utterance will take the form of a small oration without creating self-consciousness; an answer is often incisive repartee. There are orations in the coffee house, and wherever a few people gather together. Even learned papers or scientific journals, when not under foreign influence, are often couched in oratory. *Couvenda*, conversation, is a recognized form of "passing the time", of entertainment, perhaps on a par with *syryani*. *Couvenda* is rarely desultory, or the mere exchange of information. It is usually contrapuntal virtuosity, incisive, combative, loud; and loudness is such a familiar quality of conversation that radios are turned on much too loud for the ears of foreigners. A statement or a question is countered by a challenging question. Tact and gentleness have no part here, insults are hurled, attacks are made, within the appropriate limits. A discussion is a battle of personal opinion, and its end is neither to reach the truth nor to reach a conclusion; its end is sheer enjoyment of vigorous speech.

The hair is a focus of erotic attraction. In the folk songs there is often the picture of a girl letting her hair down as a ladder hung for her lover. For the man, the moustache is a symbol of his manhood and attractiveness. The beard is not important, and in a folk song, a priest's wife calls her husband a bearded goat. A man without face hair is called a *Spanos*, and is a figure of derision in the folklore, and sometimes of fear.

Beyond the features of the head, very little of the body is mentioned in the personal folk songs. Genital organs must never be mentioned, and many women know no names for them. Out of over 400 love couplets analysed, only one mentions the breast, "your breast is like Paradise". Formally, as a general division of the body—the chest—the breast is named in the same way for men and women and the term can be used freely. In its form of a female breast it must not be mentioned, as none of the sexual areas are mentioned. Its functional term, however, the nursing-breast, *vyzi*, is commonly used without embarrassment and when a mother is nursing, there is no embarrassment about exposing the breast for suckling.

The sense of smell is extremely important to the Greeks. In the personal folk poems, there is much mention of sweet-smelling flowers, herbs, trees: "musk and cinnamon, a beautiful girl she is" says a rhyming game. An unexpected guest will be offered a "smell" of whatever the housewife is cooking, or the family is eating. And it